



U.S. Military Casualty Statistics: Operation New Dawn, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom

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Summary

This report presents difficult-to-find statistics regarding U.S. military casualties in Operation New Dawn (OND), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF, Afghanistan), including those concerning post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), amputations, evacuations, and the demographics of casualties. Some of these statistics are publicly available at the Department of Defense's (DOD's) website, while others have been obtained through contact with experts at DOD.

Daily updates of total U.S. military casualties in OND, OIF, and OEF can be found at the DOD's website, at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/casualty.pdf>. In addition, CRS Report R40824, *Iraq Casualties: U.S. Military Forces and Iraqi Civilians, Police, and Security Forces*, contains statistics on U.S. military and Iraqi civilian casualties, while CRS Report R41084, *Afghanistan Casualties: Military Forces and Civilians*, contains statistics on U.S. military and Afghan civilian casualties.

This report will be updated as needed.

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Operation New Dawn..... | 1 |
| Rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Amputation..... | 1 |
| Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder | 1 |
| Traumatic Brain Injury | 3 |
| Amputations | 4 |
| Gender Distribution of Deaths | 5 |
| Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Deaths | 5 |
| Self-Inflicted Wounds | 6 |
| Medical Evacuation Statistics for U.S. Military Personnel | 7 |
| Operation Iraqi Freedom | 7 |
| Operation Enduring Freedom | 7 |

Figures

| | |
|---|---|
| Figure 1. Annual Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Diagnoses in All Services | 2 |
| Figure 2. Severity of Traumatic Brain Injury Diagnoses | 4 |

Tables

| | |
|---|---|
| Table 1. Annual New Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Diagnoses in All Services..... | 2 |
| Table 2. Traumatic Brain Injuries in the U.S. Military..... | 3 |
| Table 3. Count of Individuals with Amputations by Service for OIF, OEF, and Unaffiliated Conflicts, 2001 to September 1, 2010..... | 4 |
| Table 4. OIF Gender Distribution of Deaths | 5 |
| Table 5. OEF Gender Distribution of Deaths | 5 |
| Table 6. OIF Race/ Ethnicity Distribution of Deaths | 6 |
| Table 7. OEF Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Deaths | 6 |
| Table 8. OIF Medical Reasons for Evacuations..... | 7 |
| Table 9. OEF Medical Reasons for Evacuation | 8 |

Contacts

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Author Contact Information | 8 |
|----------------------------------|---|

Operation New Dawn

On August 31, 2010, President Obama announced that the U.S. combat mission in Iraq had ended. A transitional force of U.S. troops will remain in Iraq with a different mission: “advising and assisting Iraq’s Security Forces, supporting Iraqi troops in targeted counterterrorism missions, and protecting our civilians.”¹

As of September 28, 2010, six servicemembers have died in Operation New Dawn (OND). Also, 16 servicemembers in OND have been wounded and not returned to duty and 14 servicemembers in OND have been wounded and returned to duty.²

Rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Amputation

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The U.S. Army Office of the Surgeon General provided the statistics below on the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) cases. A case of PTSD is defined as an individual having at least two outpatient visits or one or more hospitalizations at which PTSD was diagnosed. The threshold of two or more outpatient visits is used to increase the likelihood that the individual actually had PTSD.

A single visit on record commonly reflects someone who was evaluated for possible PTSD, but did not actually meet the established criteria for diagnosis. In addition, although the diagnosis of PTSD occurred at some point after the individual deployed, there is no way to determine that the PTSD resulted from an event associated with the deployment, that is, it could have resulted from an event that occurred after return from or prior to a deployment.³

The Army has 67% of the cases, the Air Force has 9%, the Navy has 11%, and the Marines have 13%. **Table 1** and **Figure 1** present yearly PTSD diagnoses for all services.

¹ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the End of Combat Operations in Iraq, August 31, 2010, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/08/31/remarks-president-address-nation-end-combat-operations-iraq>.

² Department of Defense, “Operation New Dawn Casualty Status,” at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/casualty.pdf>.

³ Personal communication with CRS from Department of Defense Office of the Secretary of Defense liaison, September 21, 2010.

Table I. Annual New Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Diagnoses in All Services

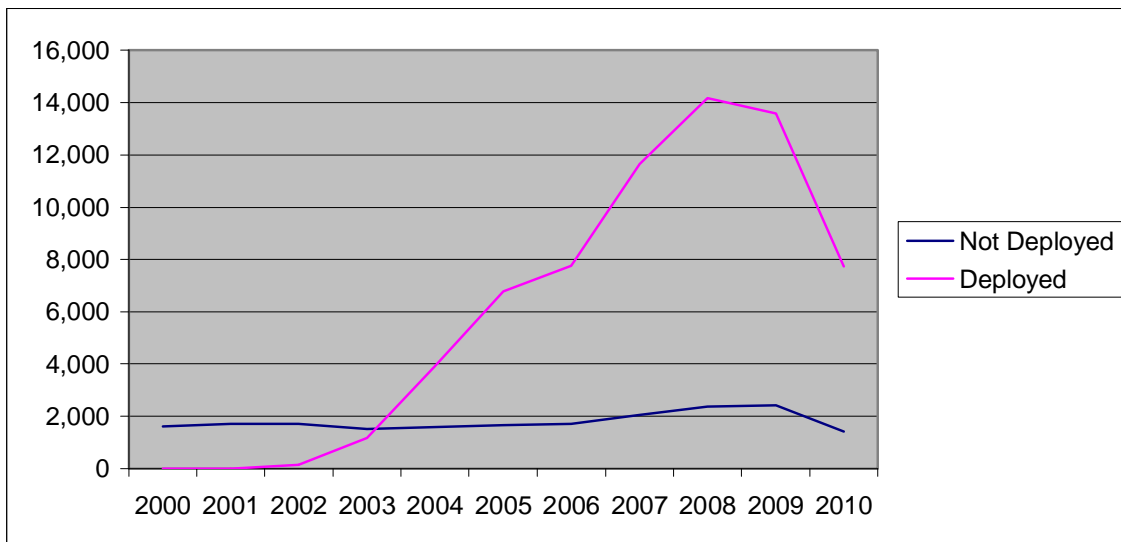
As of September 7, 2010

| Year | Not Deployed | Deployed |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2000 | 1,614 | 0 |
| 2001 | 1,703 | 0 |
| 2002 | 1,709 | 138 |
| 2003 | 1,524 | 1,169 |
| 2004 | 1,577 | 3,901 |
| 2005 | 1,648 | 6,788 |
| 2006 | 1,714 | 7,762 |
| 2007 | 2,069 | 11,660 |
| 2008 | 2,371 | 14,183 |
| 2009 | 2,432 | 13,595 |
| 2010 | 1,423 | 7,739 |
| Total | 21,784 | 66,935 |

Source: Personal communication with Dr. Michael Carino, Army Office of the Surgeon General, September 21, 2010. Data source is the Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS).

Figure I. Annual Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Diagnoses in All Services

As of September 7, 2010



Source: Personal communication with Dr. Michael Carino, Army Office of the Surgeon General, September 21, 2010. Data source is the Defense Medical Surveillance System (DMSS).

Traumatic Brain Injury

The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center gives the following incidence of traumatic brain injury (TBI):

Table 2. Traumatic Brain Injuries in the U.S. Military
2000 to 2010 Q1

| Calendar Year | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 Q1 ^a | Total |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------------|---------|
| Incident Diagnoses | 10,963 | 11,830 | 12,469 | 12,886 | 13,271 | 12,025 | 16,873 | 23,002 | 28,557 | 27,862 | 7,604 | 178,876 |

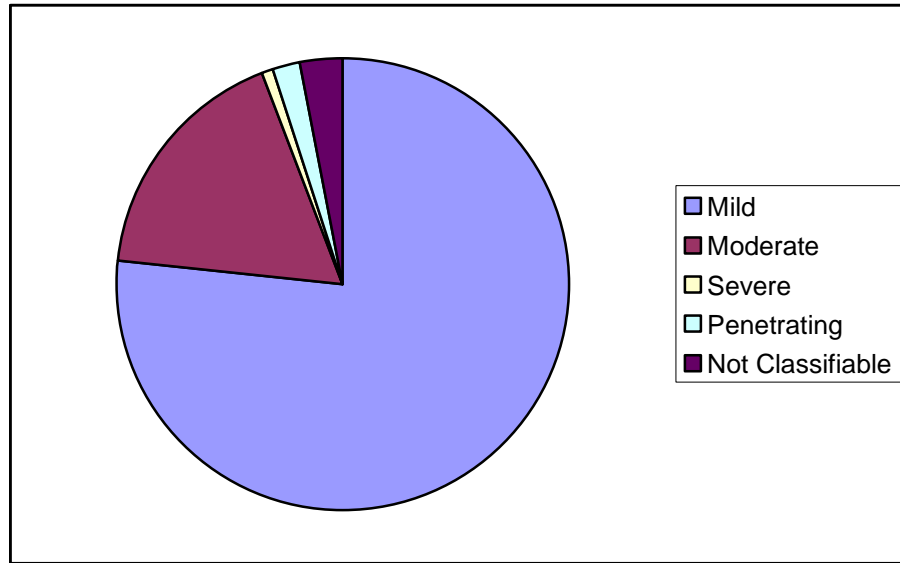
Source: The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, <http://www.dvbic.org/TBI-Numbers.aspx>, last updated on May 20, 2010.

a. Q1 covers January to March 2010.

Of the total 178,876 TBI cases since 2000, 137,328 have been mild, 30,893 have been moderate, 1,891 have been severe, 3,175 have been penetrating, and 5,589 have not been classifiable.⁴

Figure 2 shows the relative rates of mild, moderate, severe, penetrating, and not classifiable TBIs.

⁴ Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center at <http://www.dvbic.org/TBI-Numbers.aspx>. The DOD categorizes TBI cases as mild, moderate, severe, or penetrating. Mild TBI is characterized by a confused or disoriented state lasting less than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for up to thirty minutes; memory loss lasting less than 24 hours; and structural brain imaging that yields normal results. Moderate TBI is characterized by a confused or disoriented state that lasts more than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for more than 30 minutes, but less than 24 hours; memory loss lasting greater than 24 hours but less than seven days; and structural brain imaging yielding normal or abnormal results. Severe TBI is characterized by a confused or disoriented state that lasts more than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for more than 24 hours; memory loss for more than seven days; and structural brain imaging yielding normal or abnormal results. A penetrating TBI, or open head injury, is a head injury in which the dura mater, the outer layer of the system of membranes that envelops the central nervous system, is penetrated. Penetrating injuries can be caused by high-velocity projectiles or objects of lower velocity, such as knives, or bone fragments from a skull fracture that are driven into the brain.

Figure 2. Severity of Traumatic Brain Injury Diagnoses

Source: Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center at <http://www.dvbic.org/TBI-Numbers.aspx>.

Amputations

Table 3 shows the number of individuals with amputations for OIF, OEF, and unaffiliated conflicts. The total number of amputations in all conflicts is 1,621.

Table 3. Count of Individuals with Amputations by Service for OIF, OEF, and Unaffiliated Conflicts, 2001 to September 1, 2010

| Theater | Type of Amputation | Army | Marine | Navy | Air Force | Foreign | Other | Total |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|--------|------|-----------|---------|-------|--------------|
| OIF | Major Limb | 620 | 158 | 18 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 816 |
| | Partial (Hand/Foot, Toes/Fingers) | 272 | 49 | 7 | 11 | 0 | 3 | 342 |
| OEF | Major Limb | 145 | 53 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 217 |
| | Partial (Hand/Foot, Toes/Fingers) | 24 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 32 |
| Unaffiliated Conflicts | Major Limb | 94 | 12 | 25 | 31 | 1 | 26 | 189 |
| | Partial (Hand/Foot, Toes/Fingers) | 20 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 25 |
| Total | | | | | | | | 1,621 |

Source: Personal correspondence with Dr. Michael J. Carino, Army Office of the Surgeon General, September 21, 2010.

Gender Distribution of Deaths

Tables 4 and 5 provide statistics on the gender distribution of OIF and OEF casualties (also available on DOD's website, <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>). All numbers for OIF and OEF are current as of August 31, 2010. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. As of September 28, 2010, all six servicemembers who have died in OND were male.⁵

Table 4. OIF Gender Distribution of Deaths

| Gender | Military Deaths | % of Total Deaths |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Male | 4,298 | 97.5 |
| Female | 110 | 2.5 |
| Total | 4,408 | 100.0 |

Source: DOD, Operation Iraqi Freedom—Military Deaths, at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oif-deaths-total.pdf>.

Table 5. OEF Gender Distribution of Deaths

| Gender | Military Deaths | % of Total Deaths |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Male | 1,242 | 98.4 |
| Female | 20 | 1.6 |
| Total | 1,262 | 100.0 |

Source: DOD, Operation Enduring Freedom—Military Deaths, at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oefdeaths.pdf>.

Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Deaths

Tables 6 and 7 provide statistics on the race and ethnicity distribution of OIF and OEF casualties (also on DOD's website, <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>). All numbers for OIF and OEF are current as of September 4, 2010. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. As of September 28, 2010, four servicemembers who have died in OND were white and two were black or African American.⁶

⁵ Department of Defense, "Operation New Dawn Casualty Status," at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/casualty.pdf>.

⁶ Ibid.

Table 6. OIF Race/ Ethnicity Distribution of Deaths

| Race/Ethnicity | Military Deaths | % of Total Deaths |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 42 | 1.0 |
| Asian | 82 | 1.9 |
| Black or African American | 429 | 9.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 466 | 10.6 |
| Multiple races, pending, or unknown | 48 | 1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 51 | 1.2 |
| White | 3,290 | 74.6 |
| Total | 4,408 | 100 |

Source: DOD, Operation Iraqi Freedom—Military Deaths, at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oif-deaths-total.pdf>.

Table 7. OEF Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Deaths

| Race/Ethnicity | Military Deaths | % of Total Deaths |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 17 | 1.3 |
| Asian | 19 | 1.5 |
| Black or African American | 90 | 7.1 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 100 | 7.9 |
| Multiple races, pending or unknown | 14 | 1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 14 | 1.1 |
| White | 1,008 | 80.0 |
| Total | 1,262 | 100 |

Source: DOD, Operation Enduring Freedom—Military Deaths, at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oefdeaths.pdf>.

Self-Inflicted Wounds

According to DOD's casualty website, as of August 31, 2010, 216 servicemembers have died of self-inflicted wounds while serving in OIF and 44 have died of self-inflicted wounds while serving in OEF.⁷ No information is yet available concerning cause of death for the six servicemembers who have died in OND.

⁷ Department of Defense Personnel and Procurement Statistics, Statistical Information and Analysis Department, OIF at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oif-total.pdf> and OEF at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/wotsum.pdf>.

Medical Evacuation Statistics for U.S. Military Personnel

U.S. military personnel evacuation statistics as of August 31, 2010, for OIF and September 4, 2010, for OEF can be found at the DOD websites, <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oif-total.pdf> for OIF and <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/wotsum.pdf>. Evacuation statistics for OND are not yet available.

Operation Iraqi Freedom

According to DOD, a total of 49,390 individuals were medically evacuated from OIF from March 19, 2003, to August 31, 2010. Of the total number of medical evacuations, 40,436 were non-hostile-related medical air transports, and the remaining 8,954 were for servicemembers who were wounded in action. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 8. OIF Medical Reasons for Evacuations
(as of August 31, 2010)

| | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Wounded in Action | 8,954 | 18.1% |
| Non-Hostile Injuries ^a | 10,383 | 21.0% |
| Disease/Other Medical | 30,053 | 60.1% |
| Total | 49,390 | 100% |

Source: Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Data Center, <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/oif-total.pdf>.

- a. The Department of Defense defines a “non-hostile injury” as an injury that is not directly attributable to hostile action or terrorist activity, such as casualties due to the elements, self-inflicted wounds, or combat fatigue.

Operation Enduring Freedom

According to DOD, a total of 13,851 individuals were medically evacuated from OEF from October 7, 2001, through August 31, 2010. Of the total number of medical evacuations, 11,063 were non-hostile-related medical air transports, and the remaining 2,788 were for servicemembers who were wounded in action. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 9. OEF Medical Reasons for Evacuation
(as of August 31, 2010)

| | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Wounded in Action | 2,788 | 20.1% |
| Non-Hostile Injuries ^a | 2,771 | 20.0% |
| Disease/Other Medical | 8,292 | 60.0% |
| Total | 13,851 | 100% |

Source: Department of Defense, Deployment Health Support Directorate, <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/wotsum.pdf>.

- a. The Department of Defense defines a “non-hostile injury” as an injury that is not directly attributable to hostile action or terrorist activity, such as casualties due to the elements, self-inflicted wounds, or combat fatigue.

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